

## EXHIBIT C

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01-16-2008

Dear Judge Batts,

First and foremost, I will like to apologize to the court, the government, my family and every single person that has been affected one way or the other by my actions. I am deeply sorry for my crimes and if I had to do it all over again, I'll do things differently.

Your honour, as you may already know, I am an immigrant from Ghana, West Africa and like many others, I am obliged to leave my home and family to travel abroad to seek greener pastures due to the economic conditions of Africa. I left Ghana at a young age after having lost my father and there was no one to help. I am the first of 3 children and I had to assume the responsibility of taking care of my mother, my brother and my sister. I come from a polygamy family setup and therefore have several other <sup>half</sup> brothers and sisters. My family was very poor growing up but despite the financial restraints, my father ~~managed~~ to

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strove to make ends meet and this he has taught me until his untimely death.

My mother on the other hand suffers from an illness known as epilepsy. Epilepsy is a disorder of the brain characterized by sudden attacks or seizures. She suffers from a type of epilepsy known as the grand mal, which is the most dramatic type of epilepsy. During attacks, she loses consciousness and falls and her muscles jerk for about a few minutes after which she goes into deep sleep.

She gets frequent attacks and on one occasion, she had an attack while preparing dinner and she fell and got burnt severely on one side of her ~~face~~ head. My mother is the only parent I have left and seeing her go through this pain was unbearable.

I travelled to the United States to work hard and be able to

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take care of my family back home. I have been the sole provider for my mother and siblings all these years ~~long~~ as far as food, shelter, medical bills, and tuition are concerned. I haven't seen my family in almost 7 years but ~~the~~ my only consolation is that, I am able to take care of them and she is ~~still~~ healthy and happy. My brother is in college and my sister has completed high school and awaiting to enter college.

I am an ambitious person who wants to go to college and become a radiologist but nevertheless I was forced to put that aside due to immigration issues.

I met my wife Tracey, in 2003 and we got married the following year. She has been very loving, caring and supportive. A few months after we met, she was admitted at the hospital and I came to learn that she had Lupus. At first, she didn't want to tell me and was ashamed of it and was afraid I might leave her, but rather I consoled her and told

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her about my own story. I told her about my mother suffering from a major illness but my father never abandoned her, therefore I'm gonna follow my father's foot steps and do all I could to take care of her.

Lupus is a disease that attacks the immune system and thereby leaving the body open to all sorts of illnesses. She gets all sorts of rashes all over her face and body and sometimes can hardly walk or even talk. Due to her illness, she could never keep a job and so could not contribute to the family income. I was responsible for everything. I never wanted her to be a burden to the ~~full~~ society and therefore refused to let her apply for ~~the~~ government assistance. I took everything upon myself and was the breadwinner of 2 families, the one bulk home,

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And this one in America.

I tried to go back to college at Essex county in Newark where I ~~went~~ previously attended for one semester but couldn't continue due to financial restraints. I had so many financial difficulties and the stress and desperation led me to succumb to the invitation to engage in this criminal activity. I took part in this immoral act and new exactly that what I was doing was bad. My intentions was to save some money to solve some of my problems but I still felt very uncomfortable with myself. I hid it from my family and friends. After about 2 months, I <sup>voluntarily</sup> ~~decided~~ withdrew from it and I went and applied for college. I payed the balance I owed and also payed for the current semester. It was a new year and this was my new years resolution & I started attending college and ~~work~~ eventually my bad deeds caught up with me.

I got arrested on January 22nd <sup>2007</sup> and

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have been detained since then. I have never ~~been~~ been in prison before and I am the first in my entire family to be in prison. I have brought so much pain and disgrace to the same people I was trying to help. Being here for this long has given me more than enough time to think and analyse my life and ~~is~~ in fact, if I had ~~the~~ to do it all over again, I'll do things differently. I have caused so many people grief and sorrow and offended so many, most importantly my God. I fast twice a week hoping for forgiveness from God. Theft is a very serious crime in my religion, <sup>and it</sup> is punishable by the amputation of the wrist. I am at risk of receiving this punishment when I return home. I am very upset with myself and ~~am~~ also very sorry for what I did. I sit in my cell and weep in my lonesome. I have lost my beloved

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cousin ~~white is here~~ who <sup>was</sup> only 17 while in here. I couldn't even be at her funeral. This "jail thing" is not for me. I am somebody who wants to be out there and provide help for others, even if not financially, I can give physical and emotional support. My life is a waste being in here. I look at being in prison as something next to death because I cannot be of any use to the ones that give meaning to my existence namely my mother and my wife. One thing is for sure though, through all this pain and stress that I go through on a daily basis, I have learned that the end does not always justify the means. I have also learned to have more respect for the law. I have also learned that whatever effort I put in ~~to~~ committing this crime, I could have used the same effort to do positive stuff. I have really learned a lot your honour. I am absolutely ready to go out and face the world as a better person with

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a promising future. I also plan to share my experience to the younger ones around me and I hope to make a difference.

I therefore ask your honour's mercy and leniency at the time of sentencing. I also want to make a promise to you that, whatever leniency you bestow on me will be highly appreciated and will be used in the most positive way. You don't have to worry about seeing me in your court again. I'll do everything in my power to completely stay out of trouble.

Once again, I am depending on your mercy, not only me, but my mother, my wife, my little cousins, my grandparents and my ~~whole~~ entire family as a whole. In fact your leniency will go along way to save lives.

Yours faithfully  
Abess Bles.